

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claim 13 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please AMEND claims 12, 15-17 and 21 and add new Claim 22 as follows. For the Examiner's convenience, all claims currently pending have been reproduced below.

1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for~~ of applying to a recording medium a liquid consisting of a first liquid composition and a second liquid composition, each of the liquid compositions comprising:

a functional substance[.];

an amphiphilic block copolymer[.]; and

a liquid medium, with a pH and a pKa of an organic acid group or a salt of the organic acid group of the copolymer of the first liquid composition being different than a pH and a pKa of an organic acid group or a salt of the organic acid group of the copolymer of the second liquid composition,

wherein (i) the first liquid composition is greater than the second liquid composition in pH of the liquid compositions, (ii) the first liquid composition is greater than the second liquid composition in pKa of the organic acid group or the salt of the organic acid group of the copolymers, (iii) the organic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition is a sulfonic acid, and (iv) an increase in viscosity of the first liquid composition is caused by a decrease in pH of the first liquid composition on contact with the second liquid composition.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the difference between the pKa of the organic acid groups or the salts of the organic acid groups contained in the copolymers of the first and second compositions is 0.3 or more, and a difference between a pH of the first and second liquid compositions is 0.3 or more.

15. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein the difference between the pKa of the organic acid groups or the salts of the organic acid groups contained in the copolymers is ~~2 or more~~ at least two.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein the pKa of ~~at least one of the organic acid groups or the salts of the organic acid groups~~ the sulfonic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition at least two is 2 or less.

17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein the organic acid groups of the copolymer of the first liquid composition are selected from benzoic acid groups, aliphatic dicarboxylic acid groups, aromatic dicarboxylic acid groups, halogen-substituted benzoic acid groups, and sulfonic acid groups.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the amphiphilic block copolymer has an alkenyl ether as a repeating monomer unit.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the functional substance is enclosed by the amphiphilic block copolymer.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the functional substance is a colorant.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for liquid application, said apparatus comprising:

[a] liquid applying means for applying the liquid by the method of claim 12;

and

[a] driving means for driving the liquid applying means.

22. (New) The method according to claim 12, wherein the pKa of the sulfonic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition is not higher than zero.